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4-H CLUB WORK PROMOTES GOOD HEALTH

A radio talk by Mrs. Rosanne Armstrong, Local Leader, South Bend, Indiana, delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, January 4, 1936, and broadcast by a network of 60 associate NBC radio stations.

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Everyone has a favorite future planned out for himself. Perhaps yours is music, medicine, mathematics, athletics, or finance. Whatever it may be, you are dreaming of the day when you will be asked to join the big leagues of that particular line of work. Of course, we all can not be leaders, however it takes a certain amount of health and happiness to keep us progressing along our lines. The hours of the day not spent in work should be as carefully planned as the work hours, in order to add to the enjoyment of living. 4-H Club projects are especially designed to occupy the leisure time rural boys and girls experience during the summer months.

Working with 4-H Club projects for a number of years in St. Joseph County, Indiana, and being particularly interested in health, I am going to try to enumerate some of the reasons I think the clubs' activities are a means of laying the foundation for normal, happy adolescence.

Among the work requirements of the members in Indiana 4-H Health Club projects are two that might prove interesting to you. The first is - each child must weigh monthly and keep a growth record for three to twelve months. The second - each member keeps a daily health habit record for four weeks. To some this may seem a foolish waste of time - however - when we consider the fact that habits fixed in childhood become permanent fixtures in adulthood, can we say it is not worth while? Such habits as regular cleansing baths, daily hygiene of the mouth, routine time of relaxation, sleep, work, and outdoor activities, daily well balanced meals and established regular body elimination all are practices that could be followed religiously by parents as well as children. Community health would likewise be much improved.

In our State, each member enrolls in the project year where he or she is best fitted to work, and selects a project under the direction of a 4-H Club leader, trained or public health nurse, one having a Red Cross certificate of training or a family physician. The following subjects are open for selection: Personal Hygiene, which also includes the study of posture; School Lunches, in this project the members learn how to organize and prepare a hot lunch program at school and in their own homes; Elementary and Advanced First Aid, are self explanatory; Infant and Child Care, includes caring for a child a certain period of time, supervising his diet, rest, clothing and play; Home Care of the Sick and Care of an Invalid, instructs the members in regular home nursing procedure. Bulletins, literature and text books are received from the State University, U. S. Department of Labor Childrens' Bureau, American Red Cross and local libraries. Actual demonstrations are especially stressed. The groups having regular classroom periods, during which each member must take part in demonstrating certain sections of the projects they have learned.

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This brings to mind an incident I encountered at one of my county schools where I had had 4-H elementary first aid classes the preceding summer. A pupil had fainted in one of the classrooms. Two of my 4-H Health Club girls happened to be in the room at the time. Immediately they proceeded in a very practical and assured manner to take care of the situation remarkably well, and when I appeared on the scene the patient was resting comfortably. Time does not permit me to mention the various other incidents in which girls and boys, former 4-H Health Club members, have handled emergency situation in the same careful manner. In some of the schools the weighing and measuring of students is entirely supervised by 4-H Club members in place of the teacher.

A spectacular feature of the 4-H Club activities is the annual Healthy Boy and Girl Contest, to which all club members who have reached the age of fifteen are eligible. By a process of elimination each county sends its healthiest applicant to the state, where a corps of expert physicians, dentists, nurses and assistants leave no stone unturned in attempting to choose the Health King and Queen. To be crowned the healthiest boy or girl of the state is no small matter, and the methods of training and rehabilitation some of the youths use to obtain this honor is most surprising. Aside from assuming glory, the physical examinations the boys and girls receive are a means of establishing acquaintance with their own personal health, and instilling a feeling there that periodic physical examinations are necessary for each and everyone.

In closing, I should like to tell all of you listening boy and girl 4-H Club members, that if you consistently follow the health rules that your club is teaching you --- you might miss being president or a great leader -- but you are going to have a glorious amount of fun just living-- which is the righteous reward of all good health.

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